

## **RURAL AGENCIES RECEIVE FEDERAL FUNDS FOR LIFE-SAVING EQUIPMENT**

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CONTACT: Sean Trask  
(916) 322-4336

SACRAMENTO – Rural communities will receive new automated external defibrillators (AEDs) with the award of nearly \$200,000 in federal funds to 33 state and local agencies, the California Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Authority announced today. The grants will improve emergency treatment of cardiac arrest victims and will be used to train first responders in the use of this life-saving equipment.

“Governor Schwarzenegger has supported all state departments as we endeavor to obtain California’s fair share of federal funds,” said Richard Watson, interim director of the EMS Authority.

The equipment will be made available to rural public health clinics serving at-risk populations and first responders, such as law enforcement agencies and fire departments.

“When someone is in cardiac arrest, time is critical. The limited resources in rural areas will be greatly enhanced with this equipment,” said Watson.  
“Defibrillators greatly improve the chances of survival for a cardiac arrest patient.”

The EMS Authority is responsible for establishing minimum training and implementation standards for the use of AEDs. It has specific regulations regarding AEDs that encompass layperson rescuers; public safety personnel, such as firefighters, peace officers and municipal lifeguards; and emergency medical technicians.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Rural Policy made a \$12.4 million nationwide grant available in 2003 as part of its Rural Access to Emergency Devices Grant Program. The program encourages coordination between state Offices of Rural Health and state EMS offices to develop the most efficient placement plans for emergency devices in collaboration with local communities based upon rural areas served.

The EMS Authority submitted one grant application for all California requestors.

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